

## AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY AND STATUS

8332

(Revised September 2001)

### AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY

8332.1

(Revised September 2001)

Pilots and aircraft are required to be available and ready for immediate incident response per the existing contract. Air attack and helitack aircraft are to be available seven days a week during the fire season.

- Any changes in aircraft availability not due to mechanical problems must have prior approval of CDF (Regional Duty Chief), including:
- Requests for placing pilots on callback or day-off status during low fire danger periods
- Requests for substitution of aircraft and/or pilots as allowed by CDF policy or contracts
- Requests for changing pilot or aircraft days off
- All changes in aircraft status require notification
- The individual or location requesting the status change is responsible for the initiation of notification through normal ECC channels.
- Unit and Region will process and relay requests and notifications according to ECC procedures.

### DAILY OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

8332.2

(No. 16 September 2004)

A normal daily start-up time is set for each base according to zone-of-influence needs as approved by the Region Chief. This is the time specified for all personnel and aircraft at the base to be ready for immediate incident response.

The normal cut-off time for a base shall be thirty minutes before sunset. Base personnel will be available until sunset. (See [8362.7.2 Aircraft Startup and Shutdown Times](#).)

This cut-off time applies only when aircraft are not already engaged in operations at an incident.

Official timetables for each base are located in the [Aircraft Operations and Flight Rules, Startup and Cutoff Information](#).

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An extension of normal operational periods may be required under the following conditions:

- Ongoing fire flight operations may be extended beyond normal base start-up and cut-off time when the air attack supervisor or helitack captain and pilots involved concur that good visibility exists for low level operations in specific areas.
- CDF aircraft may be dispatched to an Initial Attack response after official cut off time within the base Zone of Influence response area. This will be agreed upon by the ATGS or Helitack captain and the pilots involved. They will take into consideration flight safety of the pilot and public, distance to incident, weather, ambient light conditions, familiarity with hazards and overall safety conditions of response. (See Aircraft Startup and Shutdown Times [8362.7.2.](#))
- The 14-hour duty day limitation will not be violated.
- No low level flights will be made by any aircraft later than 30 minutes after sunset or until 30 minutes before sunrise regardless of need unless specifically authorized in policy.

Air attack and helitack supervisors are responsible for enforcing pilot duty and flight time limits.

Normal operational periods may be temporarily extended with the approval of the Region Chief to meet demands based on unusual fire danger or activity situations.

- Early start-up times may be required during extended fire operations.
- Base operating times will be extended to correspond with extended aircraft operating periods.
- At bases with more than one aircraft assigned, the Airbase Manager with Region Chief approval may elect to stagger the start up times of aircraft to improve coverage on days with long daylight periods.
- Duty schedules should be applied equitably among flight crews.

At the end of each day, the base will report to the ECC, the status of all aircraft on base.

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## **Callback Status**

Operational periods may be shortened and pilots placed on callback status during periods of low fire danger when the using units and Region Chief approve the status change.

Callback status will include the aircraft affected and a specified time period for activating aircraft, if needed, usually within the range of thirty minutes to two hours.

Personnel on callback status must remain in contact with ECC operators or the base to meet callback requirements.

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[\(see Forms or Forms Samples\)](#)